

MARY GARDEN HARRY TIME IN MASSENET'S "CLEOPATRA"

Even Her Theatrical Genius Could Not Make Character Live—Surfeit of Operatic Offerings

By W. J. HENDERSON.

Who sings of Cleopatra? Is't the voice Of Caesar's bugles blown across the sea? Or shall it be the murmur of soft winds Among the towered palms and desert sands? What hand shall dare to strike the silent harp And beckon song to hymn the splendid name Of Cleopatra, queen of men?

It was not Massenet. He rose to his heights when he painted the soul of *Manon Lescaut* (was it a soul?) and had some inkings of immortality when he performed the theatre with the sensuous sighings of the expiring *Thais*. His *Sappho* was a peripatetic siren of the sidewalk. His *Cleopatra* is a puppet.

Many years ago Mr. Huneker called Maggie Cline a "Bruennhilde of the Bowery," and she exclaimed, "The fellow is making fun of me." Massenet has exhibited *Cleopatra* as a Dalila of the Boulevard des Italiens and somewhere in the vasty spaces of the whirling inferno, as she floats after Helen of Troy, and meets Mary Stuart, she must cry, "when that little one comes, he will sing to me 'Where are you going, my pretty queen?'"

Yet he must have read Arsene Houssaye, who wrote learnedly and lovingly about Aspasie, Cleopatra and several other ladies of the type. Mary Garden had a sorry time of it on Tuesday evening, for even her theatrical genius could not make the manikin breathe.

Cleopatra was 38 years old at the time of her death. Antony, as Plutarch tells us, had wasted himself in luxurious indulgence till he promised her the Roman empire, and she complacently agreed to take the gift. The two could not sate their appetite for folly. Their revels amazed the world. Cleopatra, as every child knows, but that she could eat ten thousand sesterces' worth at a single meal and won by drinking a priceless pearl dissolved in vinegar. She raised herself and Antony to the gods. They immortalized themselves as Isis and Osiris and their deified heads appeared on coins.

Cleopatra's intellect was as vigorous as that of Catherine the Great. She was fit to wield a sceptre. She had large, lustful dreams of empire. Rome regarded her with wide-eyed apprehension. Houssaye wrote of her as a court gossip would write only of a great foe of the realm. "Imperious will, masculine boldness and relentless ambition like hers had been exhibited by queens of her race since the old Macedonian days before Philip and Alexander." Doubtless that is true, but there was in all that line only one Cleopatra.

Only One Race of Vampires. She had the siren charm. That was her secret. Of course she was not an Egyptian. Tennyson wrote of her "dusky cheeks." Mary Garden made her as white as alabaster, with long eyes, the Egyptian eyes of the artist. What was this race? Does it matter? There is only one race of female vampires and they are all rag and a bone and a hank of hair. No one ever heard of a fat one. What chance had the polite and plump Octavia? Society manners are not baggage for sirens.

Mary Garden's rage was very splendid. Who studied her archaeology of dress one may only conjecture. Probably Cleopatra, in all her glory, never attired like this. But she had the hank of hair. It was red hair. There were red haired Greeks of course, but did they cut their hair Rusty Brown fashion? Somehow that red hair invokes red memories of another siren. We could put into the mouth of Cleopatra, charmed by the dancer Adamos, the very words of that other.

"How wasted he is! He is like a thin ivory statue! He is like an image of silver. I am sure he is chaste as the moon is. He is like a moon-beam, like a shaft of silver. I would look at him close."

And then you hear him answer: "Who is this woman looking at me? I will not have her look at me. Wherefore doth she look at me with her golden eyes under her gilded eyelids?"

Could it be the same wig, the unbecoming wig of Salome? Why not? Was not Salome one of the Cleopatras of the lesser race? And she had foul, brutal Strauss to trumpet her foul passions into the shuddering world, while this great Queen, who shook the foundations of Rome, was chanted in Avenue de l'Opera recitative as Mlle. Wagner.

I detest a queen. The Roman soldier found a queen. My crown about my brow. A name forever, lying robed and crowned. A Roman spouse.

So Tennyson makes her speak and in some such mood must this superb soul have passed the final gates. But one seeks in vain for an echo of her greatness in the opera of Massenet. Traded in the tavern scene she sinks to the level of the gutter and soils the robe of royalty. Cleopatra must indeed have been an epitome of physical passion, but not in such form as that. If she had monstrous lusts she was not vulgarly lewd.

Story Appeals to Both Sexes. Doubtless there has been much speculation about "Un Nuit de Cleopatra" and the story has a lure that appeals to men and women alike. But one cannot believe that such incidents were habitual in the career of this wide-vi-



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she had proved herself so many times last season that it was only natural to feel that she was indisposed (she is only human after all) and deferred criticism till later—till it was established beyond a doubt that she had failed to maintain her standard.

She is beyond a doubt the greatest singer in the world to-day, and there are no number of critics who can hurt her, for after all if she pleases the public, and that she surely does, there is no need to worry.

I do not think even Patti was her equal. Such singing as came from her throat last night should bring every critic in New York to her feet as she brings the public to her feet.

The audience would not let her go last night even after the "Home, Sweet Home." She sang again and could have kept on had she heeded the applause. She never becomes coquetish, ending favor or applause from an audience. She just sings, and ye gods! how she can sing!

It seems ridiculous that the critics should have taken this chilly attitude toward her this season unless they have some excuse to grind. It only makes them ridiculous in the eyes of the public.

J. T. GIFFITH.

METROPOLITAN OPERA HOUSE.

"La Boheme" will open the fifteenth week of the Metropolitan Opera season to-morrow evening. It will be sung by Mmes. Alda and Romaine and Messrs. Crimi, Scotti, De Segura, Didur, Ananias, Malatesta, Audino and Reschiglian. Mr. Papi conducting.

"Carmen" will be sung at a special matinee on Friday by Mmes. Farrar, Romaine, Braslau and Sparks and Messrs. Galli, Smith, Ogden, Boger, Bada, Ananias and Lauretti. Miss Gili will dance. Mr. Montoux will conduct.

Other operas of the week will be as follows: "Pellaeas" followed by "Petrushka" on Wednesday evening, the opera sung by Mmes. Easton and Messrs. Caruso, Montanari, Werrenrath and Montanari. The first appearance here with this company and Patrinieri, Mr. Moranzoni conducting. The ballet will be danced by Mmes. Galli, Smith, Ogden, Boger, Bada, Ananias and Lauretti. Miss Gili will dance. Mr. Montoux will conduct.

"Cavalleria Rusticana" and "Le Coq d'Or" on Thursday evening, the former sung by Mmes. Muzio, Perini and Mattfeld and Messrs. Lazzari and Chalmers. Mr. Moranzoni conducting. The latter will be sung by Mmes. Barrientos, Braslau and Sundelius and Messrs. Didur, Diaz, Ananias, Reschiglian and Audino. Mr. Moranzoni conducting.

"Le Prophete" on Friday evening, with Mmes. Muzio, Perini, Mattfeld, Auden and Tiffany and Messrs. Caruso, Rothier, Maldone, Rossi, Diaz, Malatesta, Reiss, Reschiglian, d'Angelo, Audino and Messrs. Bolm, Bartik, Bonfiglio and Agnini. Mr. Montoux conducting.

"Il Barbiere di Siviglia" will be the Sunday matinee opera, sung by Mmes. Barrientos and Mattfeld and Messrs. Hackett, De Luca, Maldone, Malatesta, Audino and Reschiglian. Mr. Papi conducting.

"Aida" will be the Saturday evening popular price performance. It will be sung by Mmes. Rappold, Matzenauer, and Curris and Messrs. Crimi, Chalmers, Didur and Rossi. Miss Quenne Smith will dance. Mr. Moranzoni will conduct.

To-night's opera concert Effren Zimbalist will be the soloist. He will play Mozart's violin concerto in A and several shorter selections. Mmes. Muzio and Braslau and Mr. Chalmers will sing. Richard Hageman will conduct.

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Song and Serenade of Mephistopheles in excerpts from "The Damnation of Faust" by Berlioz, which also include three numbers for the orchestra, Dance of the Sylphs, Will of the Wisp, and the Rakocsy March. The Fourth Symphony of Tchaikovsky will complete the programme.

At the Symphony Concert for Young People in Carnegie Hall on Saturday afternoon, February 22, Harold Bauer as soloist will play Liszt's Hungarian fantasies and Debussy's "Children's Corner," which has for titles: Doctor Gradus ad Parnassum, Jumbo's Lullaby, the Doll's Serenade, the Snow is Falling, the Little Shepherd and Gellert's Cakewalk. The orchestra will play the andantino and scherzo from Tchaikovsky's symphony No. 4, the andantino from Debussy's

Frieda Hempel will give her annual New York recital in Carnegie Hall on Tuesday afternoon, February 13.

A piano recital by Margaret Tilly will take place on Tuesday afternoon in Aeolian Hall. The programme: Toccata and fugue, Bach; Theme and variations, Mozart; Sonata, F. minor, Brahms; Revolutionary etude, nocturne, scherzo, C sharp minor, Chopin; Druids, Marion Bauer; Jeux d'Espece, Ravel; Etude, Saint-Saens.

The New York Chamber Music Society at its third concert on Tuesday evening in Aeolian Hall will play Mozart's quintet in E flat, for piano, oboe, clarinet, French horn and bassoon; Schuler's octet in F, for five strings, clarinet, French horn and bassoon; a trio in C, opus 6, by Goossens, for piano, violin and flute, and a suite written for the society by Deema Taylor called "Through the Looking Glass," which is scored for piano, five winds and five strings. This work is in four movements, entitled "Dedication," "Jabberwocky," "The White Knight" and "Looking Glass Insects."

Gulomar Novacek will give her piano recital, postponed from January 4, on Wednesday afternoon, February 13, in Aeolian Hall. The recital is for the benefit of the Association of Professors of the Paris Conservatory. The programme: Prelude, chorale and fugue, Franck; nocturne, fantasia, opus 19, two mazurkas, scherzo, opus 20, Chopin; nocturne, Faure; 3 pieces, Phillip; La Soiree dans Grenade, les Colines d'Anacapri, Minstrel, Debussy.

Arthur Rubenstein, Polish pianist, will give a recital here in Carnegie Hall Thursday afternoon, February 20. The programme: Bach-Tausig, Toccata and fugue; Beethoven, Sonata, opus 53, "Waldstein"; Chopin, Scherzo, C sharp minor, nocturne, F sharp, ballade. A

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leigh: "Down in the Forest." Ronald: Ad una fanciulla, dedicated to Mr. Carpi, G. Calamanti; O bimba bimbeta, Sibella, and Serenata gelata, Russi-Pecchia. At the piano, Eric Zardi.

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CONCERTS OF THE WEEK.

SUNDAY—Philharmonic Society, Carnegie Hall, 3 P. M. Symphony Society, Aeolian Hall, 3 P. M. Concert of Chicago Opera Company, Hippodrome, 8:15 P. M. Opera concert, Metropolitan Opera House, 8:30 P. M.

MONDAY—Sergei Prokofiev, pianist, Aeolian Hall, 3 P. M. Sunday Campaign Choir, Carnegie Hall, 8:15 P. M. Fernando Carpi, tenor, Aeolian Hall, 8:15 P. M.

TUESDAY—Frieda Hempel, soprano, Carnegie Hall, 3 P. M. Russian Symphony Society, Carnegie Hall, 8:15 P. M. Margaret Tilly, pianist, Aeolian Hall, 3 P. M. New York Chamber Music Society, Aeolian Hall, 8:15 P. M. Folk song concert, auspices People's Institute, Cooper Union Hall, 8:15 P. M.

WEDNESDAY—Russian Symphony Society, Carnegie Hall, 3 P. M. Gulomar Novacek, pianist, Aeolian Hall, 3 P. M.

THURSDAY—Arthur Rubenstein, pianist, Carnegie Hall, 3 P. M. Ernesto Berumen, pianist, Aeolian Hall, 3 P. M. Emily Gresser, violinist, Aeolian Hall, 8:15 P. M.

FRIDAY—Alice Peroux-Williams, song recital, Aeolian Hall, 8:15 P. M.

SATURDAY—Young People's concert, Carnegie Hall, 2:30 P. M. Symphony Society, Carnegie Hall, 8:15 P. M.

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